

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT
July 2001

OFFICE OF THE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR

Commission Office

The following items were discussed at the July 12, 2001 Fire and Rescue Commission meeting:

- Commissioner Fernando Bren was nominated to serve as FRC Vice Chair.
- The *Use and Wearing of Traffic Safety Vests During Incidents on Arterials, Highways and Streets* Interim Policy was adopted.
- The Station Location and Resource Allocation Work Group Phase 2B Report- Fire Station 11 was adopted.

Research and Planning

Emergency Management

CAO Annual Briefing – The Emergency Management Group presented its Annual Briefing to the CAO, EMG Department heads and disaster specialists, utilities, and other guests on August 8th. Bruce Romer and Gordon A. Aoyagi each commented on the past year's highlights and activities. These includes exercises, the activations for the Silver Spring gasoline spill, the response to West Niles, terrorism preparedness, and the on-going PS2000 efforts. K. Henning presented a powerpoint program on the work program and highlighted exercises including two bio-terrorism, one hurricane, and one school violence exercises. Copies of the Annual Report will be circulated to all local fire departments and stations as well as county agencies, libraries and State. The work program is submitted to the County Executive and CAO for approval before forwarding it to Maryland Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency as part of our annual reimbursement request for OEM salaries.

EOP- The updates of the Emergency Operations Plan were distributed to county agencies and will be distributed to the fire departments on CD Rom for the first time. This will replace annual paper updates to the red three-ring notebook which are located in each of the departments and fire and police stations. The EOP on CD contains the Basic Plan and all the Annexes approved by the Executive and the Council by resolution.

School Violence Exercise - The EMG conducted a school violence exercise on August 1st at Northwest High School, with activation of the EOC. Chief Dwyer was the Disaster Manager. A Unified Command Post was established at the school with Police, Fire and Rescue, and School officials. The objectives of the exercise were to test early notifications and initial actions by Police and school officials. Transportation of victims was not an issue. Mock victims were provided by GWGVFD and their Junior Fire Brigade, Civil Air Patrol BCC Squadron, and the Rockville Police Cadets. Red Cross did the moulage. School officials and

CAP provided on site evaluators, and MCPS filmed both the EOC and UCP in operation for later training purposes.

NOAA Radios Grant - Maryland Emergency Management Agency reported to the EMG at the Annual Briefing for the CAO that they will be providing the \$35,000 match to a federal grant earlier in the year to provide a NOAA Weather Alert Radio to every elementary school. MCPS officials are looking to provide the radios for middle and high schools if funding is available. The radios send automatic notifications for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes.

Heat Wave - OEM worked with Bill Delaney and the Information office to put out a press release on the heat wave. OEM gave Interviews to News21 and Fox Channel 5 news, and information to the Journal and Sentinel newspapers. The EMG Shelter Task Force coordinated cooling centers and senior services through the Crisis Center. Progress Place shelter was opened for evenings and weekends on a standby basis. Red Cross opened its East West Highway facility as a cooling center. Fans were provided by DHHS to needy seniors as requested.

Flooding/Flash Flooding - Brochure was printed with Federal Flood Map Assistance Program grant monies and distributed to each of the public libraries, and to agencies at the Annual CAO EMG Briefing. Information was also provided to web master to update OEM/MCFRS webpage.

e-Montgomery - Meetings have been ongoing with DIST e-Montgomery office to get HazLink database and permit filing online.

Hoof & Mouth - K. Henning participated in a Maryland Emergency Management Agency Hoof & Mouth Disease on July 31st. State agencies, a dairy farmer, and two counties participated, including Harford and Montgomery. The threat to local farming, and more importantly the food chain is being closely monitored by Md. Dept. of Agriculture from potential infections from European stock. We learned that state officials have the authority to destroy all hoof animals within a six mile radius of a confirmed case of Hoof & Mouth disease since it is so highly contagious. Additional information will be shared at the next quarterly EMG meeting.

LEPC - The Local Emergency Planning Council for Hazardous Materials held its quarterly meeting and had a demonstration of the gas chromatograph equipment by the Haz Mat team. The equipment was purchased with anti-terrorism funds.

IMF - Police are working with EMG agencies on preparations for the September-October International Monetary Fund meeting to be held in DC. Montgomery County will prepare county agencies for civil disturbance activities as part of the overall preparations.

Community Education Safety Section

Corporate Development Services:

Automation Section

Fleet and Facilities Section

Fleet Activities

- Two EMS units were delivered from Wheeled Coach. These will be assigned to Sandy Spring and Hillandale.
- Coordinated the development of final specifications for four (4) pumpers and one (1) aerial tower to be manufactured by Pierce Manufacturing.
- Continued participation in the PS 2000 project relating to mobile voice and data equipment.

Facilities Activities

- Attended progress meetings for the Sandy Spring Fire Station 4 construction project. Substantial completion is due August 2001.
- Represented the fire/rescue service at the Montgomery County Planning Board re: Collapse Rescue Team building. Construction is underway and substantial completion is due September 2001.
- Performed project tasks for the Takoma Park Fire Station 2 replacement project, including station design activities and temporary site activities. The schematic floor plans are nearing completion. Related processes are in place.
- Continued activities related to the FY 03-08 Capital Improvements Program process.

Property Section

- Processed 340 property transactions during the month of July.

DIVISION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

- Attended a meeting regarding the EMBRS
- Participated in a meeting with Pepco and the EMG
- Attended a meeting and briefing from AT&T on the wireless system
- Was invited to attend the Laytonsville Board meeting to discuss various issues and concerns
- Met with the Fire Administrator, R. Riffe and the contractor personnel regarding the LOSAP study

- Attended a briefing regarding loss prevention and control with the insurance carrier
- Met with Chief Baker, Chief Strock, N. Shorb and Dist. Chief Patullo regarding problems of concern with Chief Baker and ECC
- Attended a meeting with Dep. Chief Jackson, Dee Howard, B. Gottesman, the Fire Administrator, etc., regarding marketing issues and strategies
- Attended the COG Chiefs Committee meeting at the IAFC Headquarters
- Met with Pres. Miller and Chief Urban, BFD, regarding community issues
- Attended the Pollution Prevention committee meeting
- Met at the PSTA with Dep. Chief Jackson, Ass't. Chief Clemens and Capt. Collins regarding selection of the next nighttime paramedic class composition
- Attended a CIP meeting with the Fire Administrator, Budget personnel and S. Lamphier. Only the GWGVFD and BFD showed up.
- Attended the Fire Board, Human Relations, Safety and Training, FRC, Fire-Rescue Association (late), Operations and Chiefs' Committee meetings.
- Mediated personal, personnel and/or sensitive issues with various LFRDs, etc

DIVISION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

BUREAU OF OPERATIONS

Administration

On July 1, 2001 additional EMS service was provided to the Hillandale / Colesville region of the county as Ambulance 128 went in service. This 24 hour a day service is being provided out of Fire Station 12, 10110 New Hampshire Avenue.

The Bureau continues to focus on the completion of EMBERS reports and to ensure proper accounting of missing and or incomplete reports. We are now producing a monthly summary for fire service review.

We have been closely monitoring for changes in service delivery patterns following the budget changes that resulted in service reductions. We are working closely with local fire rescue department officials to ensure that our response capability is not unreasonably effected.

We continue to work with the Union in our efforts to expand ALS service through the use of paramedic first-responder fire apparatus. We have agreed to implement this service enhancement on a trail basis in four locations: stations 8, 23, 25, and 29.

Safety

We are meeting with other segments of fire rescue to review our vehicle accident record and are working on a plan to reduce future events. We have held an organizational meeting and are working in several areas including education, training, and a survey of apparatus as they relate to accidents.

Specialty Teams

Collapse Rescue/Urban Search and Rescue:

Swiftwater Rescue Team

Hazardous Materials Response Team

River Rescue Team

For the first half of 2001, River Rescue Units were dispatched on 18 incidents. These resulted in units arriving on the scene and conducting operations on 13 incidents. On 11 of these calls boats were required to be placed in operation. The boats transported 3 injured patients. There were 9 persons transported who did not need medical attention. River Rescue Units were dispatched on 5 incidents. The use of boats was required on all incidents. Units transported 3 injured persons and 2 uninjured persons by boat. The team was contacted by the Washington Post for a feature article which appeared July 12, 2001.

BUREAU OF PROGRAM SUPPORT SERVICES

Administration

Wellness

Recruitment/CPAT

Communications

Continuing Dispatch Education: Telephone Emergency Services and the ADA

Master Firefighter Stroup attended the National NENA conference.

All personnel assigned to ECC completed the new EMD training program.

Judy Boswell successfully completed the APCO Basic Telecommunicator Course.

Master Firefighter Branzell completed his Call Taker / Dispatch training and is now considered staffing.

Master Firefighter Larry Snyder and Firefighter Ivan Browning has transferred into ECC and began their Basic Call Taking / Dispatch training.

ECC Facts for the Month

911 calls answered: 9614

Overflow Calls answered: 774

Administrative Calls in/out: 22,294

Training

Exams completed for Emergency Vehicle Driver Testing for July are:

Written	15
Practical	11

In-Service Training Program "Rapid Intervention Company Training" sessions were held in July with 122 DFRS students and 1 LFRD student attending.

Firehouse Magazine held the "Hands-On" training portion of Firehouse Expo 2001 at the Training Academy in July. Six sessions on Fire Flows, Saving Your Own, SCBA Emergencies, Getting the Most From Your Pump, Truck Company Operations, and EVOC were held over two days. Training Academy staff assisted with the training sessions.

One career EMT-Paramedic and one volunteer Cardiac Rescue Technician were awarded charge status in July.

BUREAU OF LIFE SAFETY SERVICES

Fire Code Enforcement

During the month of July, the Fire Code Enforcement Division participated in following events:

- Assisted with Doug Duncan's enforcement of the new massage parlor regulations.
- We recently finished inspecting the core for the new 1.5 million square foot Chevy Chase Bank headquarters.
- District Chief Robert Stephan, Captain Barton and four inspectors attended Maryland Fire Code Training.

- Discussed fire drills and other life safety issues with Dr. Weast, Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools.
- Prepared information on voluntary fire sprinkler recalls to inform concerned citizens.
- Conducted training on evacuation procedures with EOB personnel.
- Senior supervisors attended MCGEO contract training

Fire and Explosive Investigation

In July, Fire and Explosive Investigators investigated 19 accidental fires and 14 criminal fire related incidents. The Bomb Squad responded to a total of 15 explosive incidents, of these incidents seven were for suspicious packages. The total estimated dollar loss for accidental fires was \$ 412,560 and \$ 316,400 for criminal fire related incidents.

The section's fireworks abatement program in its fifteenth year of operation was again successful during the fourth of July holiday. Investigators stopped 60 vehicles and confiscated over 3,000 pieces of fireworks. During the time period from June 30th to July the 7th there were 150 calls for fireworks complaints through out the county. There were no reported injuries this year!

On the fourth of July the county suffered its third fire fatality of the year. The fire was in the basement of a single family home in the City of Gaithersburg. An adult male died from smoke inhalation. Investigators determined the cause of the fire to be careless smoking.

An examination of the gas furnace from the January 1st house explosion and fire in Hillandale revealed that it was not a cause for the fire or failed resulting in a carbon monoxide release in the house. The gas hot water heater still needs to have an examination once the manufacture has been notified.

District Chief Geraci traveled to the National Emergency Training Center with MCPS Security staff to attend an EMI program. The program dealt with Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools.